

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME

INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL BARCELONA

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ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OCON FAO

SUBJ: 3RD SESSION FA GROUP ON WINE AND VINE PRODUCTS

1. SUMMARY. CENTRAL FEATURES OF SESSION INCLUDED PUBLICATION OF GOOD SITUATION AND OUTLOOK REPORT AND INTENSIVE DEBATE ON EC TRADE POLICIES. PROSPECTIVE SUPPLUSES OF COMMON WINES AND UNCERTAIN TRADE OUTLOOK WERE CAUSES FOR CONCERN. U.S. DEL STRESSED U.S. INTEREST IN DEVELOPING EXPORT MARKETS AND PROBLEMS OF TRADE BARRIERS. IN PRIVATE TALKS EC REP INDICATED EC DESIRE TO WORK OUT ACCOMMODATION WITH U.S. ON IMPORT REGULATIONS AND RELATED REQUIREMENTS OF BOTH SIDES. SEMINAR ON MARKETING PROBLEMS LARGELY DISAPPOINTING. NEXT SESSION IN 1976. END SUMMARY.

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2. HIGHLIGHTS OF 3RD SESSION OF THE FAO INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON WINE AND VINE PRODUCTS HELD IN TARRAGONA, SPAIN, OCTOBER 28-NOVEMBER 2 FOLLOW. REPORT DELAYED BY ABSENCE TELEGRAPHIC FACILITIES AT SITE.

3. IN ADDITION TO EC, GATT AND OIV, NINETEEN COUNTRIES INCLUDING ALL MAJOR TRADERS EXCEPT USSR AND PORTUGAL PARTICIPATED. REPS GENERALLY HIGHLY COMPETENT. DEBATE OFTEN CONTROVERSIAL BUT NOT ACrimonious. SESSION'S REPORT PLUS KEY FAO DOCUMENTS CONSTITUTE FIRST CLASS ANALYTICAL SUMMARY OF CURRENT WORLD PRODUCTION AND TRADE SITUATION AND OUTLOOK.

4. GROUP FORESEES INCREASING EXCESS OF PRODUCTION OVER CONSUMPTION FOR COMMON WINES AND SLOWDOWN IN TRADE GROWTH WHICH COULD BE FURTHER AGGRAVATED IN INCREASED TAXES AND PAYMENTS RESTRICTIONS IF OVERALL ECONOMIC SITUATION WORSENS. IMPROVEMENT OF AVERAGE QUALITY SEEN AS LONGTERM SOLUTION BUT THIS NECESSARILY SLOW PROCESS.

5. EC IMPORT RESTRICTIONS STRONGLY CRITICIZED BY MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES, SPAIN, YUGOSLAVIA, AUSTRALIA AND U.S. EC REP (REICHARDT) SKILLFULLY DEFENDED POLICIES, ARGUING THAT REGULATIONS LIBERALLY ADMINISTERED AND GOAL WAS NOT SELF-SUFFICIENCY. SAID SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT FOR MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES WAS NOW UNDER NEGOTIATION. THIS CRITICIZED BY AUSTRALIA, YUGOSLAVIA AND U.S. AS ONE MORE RESTRICTIVE PREFERENTIAL DEAL. PRIVATE TALKS BETWEEN EC AND U.S. DEL INDICATE COMMISSION PREPARED TO EXTEND EXISTING EXEMPTION TO U.S. WINES FROM CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND READY TO SEEK DEGREE OF ACCOMMODATION ON NEW LABELLING REQUIREMENTS WHICH BECOME EFFECTIVE NEXT SEPTEMBER. EC MOTIVE IS TO HEAD OFF ANY POSSIBLE IMPOSITION OF U.S. RESTRICTIONS ON LUCRATIVE EC EXPORT TRADE.

6. U.S. DEL NOTED CHANGES IN U.S. INDUSTRY AND MARKET, INCLUDING INCREASED PLANTINGS AND LEVELING OFF OF IMPORTS. STRESSED U.S. INTEREST IN EXPANDING EXPORTS AND CONCERN WITH TRADE BARRIERS. U.S. PLANS FOR SHIFTING TO METRIC BOTTLE SIZES AND TO REQUIRE INGREDIENT LABELING NOT RAISED IN PLENARY BUT IN PRIVATE TALKS VARIOUS REPS VOICED CONCERN OVER LIKELY DISRUPTIVE EFFORTS OF DIFFERENT MANDATORY STANDARDS FOR DIFFERENT MARKETS.

7. SEMINAR ON MARKETING DEVELOPMENTS AND PROBLEMS PLANNED
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BY SECRETARIAT AS MAJOR TOPIC WAS GENERALLY DISAPPOINTING. ALL SIX PRESENTATIONS DIFFERED IN ORIENTATION. ONLY THOSE BY SPAIN AND U.S. WERE SUFFICIENTLY FACTUAL AS TO PROVOKE MORE THAN POLITE INTEREST.

8. FULL SIX-DAY SCHEDULE FUNCTIONED SMOOTHLY. NEXT SESSION SCHEDULED FOR 1976, TENTATIVELY IN ROME. MAW

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